

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Lumbermens Richland Truss Division

Impact Washington

Lumbermens Richland Realizes Productivity Gains as Part of Industry-Wide Lean Project with Impact Washington

Client Profile:

Lumbermens Richland, a publicly-held company owned by Pro-Build, is in the lumber and truss industry. Lumbermens has been supplying building materials to professional builders across the west since 1895. The company currently employs 35 people at its facility in Richland, Washington.

Situation:

Lumbermens Richland took part in a JSP (Job Skills Program) truss project with 11 other truss companies across Washington. The project was designed to introduce Lean principles in the truss industry so that the industry could stay competitive in an area with a lot of growth. By implementing Lean, Lumbermens Richland and the other companies in the project hoped to optimize their resources and eliminate waste.

Solution:

The first phase of the project focused on training the employees from all 11 companies as a group. Lumbermens Richland trained 20 of their employees on the Principles of Lean Manufacturing. After the training, Impact Washington, formerly known as Washington Manufacturing Services (WMS), a NIST MEP network affiliate, brought in Pat Ryan of RCG Strategies, who delivered the five weeks of training and consulting. He started by conducting a Value Stream Mapping event, and from that, determined four kaizen events. The goal of the kaizen events were to: decrease lead times, increase board feet/man hour, increase inventory turns, decrease changeover times and improve equipment reliability. The individual Kaizen events focused on: 1) creating an effective plant layout, identifying equipment reliability issues and plans to improve, improved flow and waste reduction; 2) 5S, relocating computers from the office to the shop floor, reducing inventory and creating TPM (Total Productive Maintenance) checklists for the five saws and five table presses; 3) documenting standard work for office functions, creating kanbans in the factory and improved quality; and 4) conducting cycle time studies on assembly tables, refurbishing tables and jigs to improve productivity and installing new equipment.

Results:

- * Increased dollar build by 31.8 percent.
- * Anticipated cost savings of \$48,000.
- * Increased average board feet/man hour by 12.3 percent.
- * Increased average board feet/day by 50 percent.
- * Reduced inventory by 8.3 percent.

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- * Created 5 new jobs.
- * Boosted employee morale.

Testimonial:

"The project identified areas we were weak in. It turned our company around and made us more efficient in our daily operations."

Linny Landrum, General Manager